



# Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

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## IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC COMMISSION MEETING

### Date and Time:

Monday, March 21, 2011

From 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST

### Location:

Joe R. Williams Building (Hall of Mirrors)

700 W. State St., Boise Idaho

East Conference Room 100

## APPROVED MINUTES

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### COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Flory

Dwight Horsch

Dick Bronson

Dave Radford

Roger Stutzman

### ADVISORS PRESENT:

Jeff Burwell, Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

Randy Purser, Idaho Association of Soil  
Conservation Districts

Karma Bragg, Idaho District Employees  
Association

### COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Sara Schmidt

Kristin Magruder

Bill Lillibridge

Lance Holloway

### PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:

Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General

Rebecca Fry, Human Resources Officer

Terry Halbert, North Side SWCD

Bret Rumbeck, IASCD

Rick Pearson

Rick Rodgers

Steve Becker

Charlene Wimpy

Kent Foster

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2  
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4  
5 The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Flory, Idaho Soil & Water Conservation  
6 Commission (SWC) member at 12:15 p.m.

7  
8 **Dave Radford, SWC Member, moved to enter into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code §**  
9 **67-2345(a) to discuss personnel matters. Dick Bronson, SWC Secretary, seconded. No**  
10 **discussion. Roll call vote was taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion passed**  
11 **unanimously.**

12  
13 The Commission moved into executive session at 12:16 p.m. Sara Schmidt, SWC Administrator,  
14 Rebecca Fry, Human Resources Officer, and Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General, were  
15 invited to stay.

16  
17 **Executive session ended at 1:40 p.m.**

18  
19 A short break was called for at 1:41 p.m.  
20 Meeting reconvened at 2:01 p.m.

21  
22 A welcome and self introductions followed.

#### 23 24 **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

25  
26 Mr. Radford provided the update on behalf of the Strategic Plan Working Group. To date, there  
27 have been two in-person meetings and one via teleconference. All meetings have been very  
28 productive in identifying the priorities moving forward and what needs to be addressed, put on  
29 the back burner or eliminated altogether.

30  
31 Mr. Horsch thanked the working group committee for the time they have dedicated to this  
32 project and is very grateful to the input that they all have provided. It has been a great  
33 utilization of time and resources as the Commission continues to move forward.

34  
35 Steve Becker, IASCD and Nez Perce SWCD, discussed the priorities regarding mandated state  
36 workload and opportunities for local districts. In the future, the committee felt that as district  
37 allocations increase, then districts will need to be responsible to provide their own technical  
38 assistance. The working group has discussed that the natural point of transfer for that is after a  
39 TMDL plan is written (state funded Commission staff in the lead) then the individual districts  
40 are responsible for implementation efforts (district funds paying for technical staff).

41  
42 Mr. Radford advised that April 28, 2011 is the target for completing their work to have a draft  
43 strategic plan for the Commission and the districts to review prior to adoption of the plan at the  
44 June Commission meeting and submission to DFM by the required deadline of July 1, 2011.

45  
46 **SWC FINANCIALS**  
47

48 Ms. Schmidt presented the financial report ending February 28, 2011 which is 67% of the fiscal  
49 year. For the general funds budget the Commission is 61% expended in personnel costs, 49% in  
50 operating expenses, and 82% in trustee & benefits. Based on projections and trends, there  
51 should be some additional general funds in Personnel Costs and Operating Expense to roll down  
52 to Trustee & Benefits for district allocations.  
53

54 **Radford moved to direct the Administrator to pursue negotiations with NRCS to secure office**  
55 **space for the field staff and if a discount can be secured to pay for the next 12 months.**

56 **Bronson seconded.** No further discussion. Motion passed.  
57

58 **Radford moved to direct staff to request approval from DFM to roll down any additional**  
59 **Personnel Costs and Operating Expenses savings possible from the current FY2011 budget to**  
60 **Trustee & Benefits for district allocations. Stutzman seconded.** No further discussion. Motion  
61 passed.  
62

63 The commissioners thanked Mr. Burwell for his willingness and flexibility to work with the  
64 Commission to help keep our costs down.  
65

66 Pending FY 2011 Financial Requests  
67

68 Mr. Bronson advised that Kirk Vickery called earlier to advise that he would not be able to  
69 attend today's meeting in support of the Gem SWCD: CCPI Technical Assistance financial  
70 request and further spoke in support of this conservation project. Lance Holloway and Jeff  
71 Burwell discussed some of the details of the overall project.  
72

73 **Mr. Bronson moved to grant the Gem SWCD \$12,500 towards technical assistance costs for**  
74 **the CCPI project. Mr. Stutzman seconded.** Further discussion followed regarding the schedule  
75 project end date and funding cycles. There was further discussion about historical funding. **Mr.**  
76 **Bronson moved to amend the motion that the funding is based upon today's verbal NRCS**  
77 **commitment to match the funds. Mr. Stutzman seconded the amendment. No further**  
78 **discussion. The motion and amendment passed unanimously.**  
79

80 Mr. Horsch was excused from the meeting.  
81

82 **Mr. Stutzman moved to fund the Grazing conference for \$1,000, the 2011 Forestry Contest for**  
83 **\$1,500, and the Land and Soil Evaluation Event for \$400. Mr. Bronson seconded. Further**  
84 **discussion followed. Motion passed unanimously.**  
85

86 **Mr. Stutzman moved to fund the 2011 Envirothon for \$1,500. Radford seconded. No further**  
87 **discussion. Motion passed.**  
88

Ms. Schmidt discussed that the SWC will be looking at encumbering WQPA spending authority and funds for projects that are started this fiscal year but will not be completed and eligible for payment until next fiscal year. This tool is subject to DFM approval and will be useful in meeting SWC WQPA obligations as projects continue to close out. There was further discussion about program obligations.

#### NASCA

There was discussion about the NASCA association dues and the possibility of state and district staff as well as partners having that avenue open to connect with other state agencies.

**Mr. Flory moved to pay \$1,000 total for NASCA association dues. Stutzman seconded. Further discussion followed.** Districts and staff provided requested feedback about the value of services provided by NASCA. **Motion passed unanimously.** There was further discussion to clarify that this amount is all that is allowed out of the current budget.

#### FY 2012 Budget Blueprint

Ms. Schmidt discussed the FY2012 blueprint based on the budget as approved by JFAC, passed by the Senate, and currently on the House third reading calendar. Since the budget must be passed by the House and signed into law by the Governor the numbers today are good faith estimates for the purpose of discussing the budget for FY 2012.

The Dedicated Fund Budget Blueprint was discussed first. The staff draft Operating budget is \$131,714 and Personnel budget is \$41,500 for a total of \$173,214. This assumes the ongoing expenses for HR, IT and fiscal support, the ongoing expenses for the shared loan officer with Office of Energy Resources (OER), the appropriate amount of postage, phone and rent from the Boise office being charged to RCRDP to cover program costs. Unused personnel funds might need to be rolled down to operating to cover loan officer expenses through the OER MOU. The blueprint also assumes commissioner per diem and a percentage of staff time being charged to RCRDP for time worked on the loan program.

**Mr. Radford moved to approve use of interest earned from the loan program towards the reasonable and allowable personnel and operating expenses incurred in support of loan program goals and objectives. Mr. Bronson seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed.**

Ms. Schmidt further presented the General Fund Budget Blueprint for FY 2012. JFAC approved Trustee & Benefits at \$1,103,200, Operating Expenses at \$178,000, and Personnel Costs at \$968,600.

Trustee & Benefits is budgeted to be distributed in the following manner: \$433,500 for base funding which assumes \$8,500 for each district; \$619,700 for match funding which is a projected state match of \$1.46 for every local dollar contributed; and \$50,000 for WQPA. The blueprint also assumes an encumbrance of at least \$54,000 in FY2011 for WQPA projects are started but not completed until FY 2012. Historically, WQPA has been budgeted first with the

remaining funds going towards district allocations. Ms. Schmidt is recommending that a smaller amount of funds be set aside for WQPA on a first-come, first-served basis in order to allow more funds for district allocations. There was further discussion about the process of closing out the WQPA projects.

Operating Expenses budgeted in the blueprint at \$173,203 with a contingency of \$4,797. Assumes the FY 2012 field office rent prepaid and budgets for a similar payment in spring of 2012 for FY 2013; includes mandatory payment to the AG, SCO, and other state services. Assumes appropriate amount of expenses for postage, phones, etc., being charged off to RCRDP. Assumes any savings could be rolled down to unfunded WQPA or district allocations. The blueprint also includes up to \$42,500 for payment to ICRMP of \$850 for base insurance for 50 districts.

Personnel Expenses projections are \$996,216, which is \$27,616 over the \$968,600 approved by JFAC. These projections assume that the appropriate amount of staff time will be charged off to RCRDP. Since state budget law does not allow for other funds to be rolled up, the Administrator will have to take steps to balance the personnel costs with the available budget.

There was further discussion about increased fuel expenses of 25% for the remainder of FY 2011 and all of FY 2012.

Discussion continued about options available if the Commission does not fund the ICRMP insurance payment for FY 2012. The \$42,500 could be rolled down to district allocation or perhaps the district capacity grant proposal. In the past, DFM has waived the 10% limitation on percentage of total budget that is allowed for a roll down, so they may limit any roll down from OE to approximately \$17,000. There was discussion about the value of the ICRMP training to the districts.

**Mr. Radford moved to set base funding for district allocations at \$8,500 per district. Mr. Stutzman seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.**

**Mr. Bronson moved to direct staff to extend the MOU with Dept of Administration for human resource, information technology and fiscal support and extend the MOU with Office of Energy Resources for a shared loan officer for one year based on mutually agreeable terms. Mr. Stutzman seconded. Further discussion about multi-year agreements. Motion passed.**

Discussion about setting the WQPA budget based on estimates and the concept of budgeting less than what the districts think they might need.

**Mr. Radford moved to set the WQPA budget for FY 2012 at \$50,000. Mr. Bronson seconded. Further discussion. Motion passed.**

Mr. Horsch rejoined the meeting during the motion and abstained from voting.

Ms. Schmidt reiterated that this is the budget blueprint for FY2012 and is contingent upon passing the House and being signed by the Governor. If there are any changes that occur in the legislature, staff will revisit the breakdowns.

**Mr. Bronson moved to adopt all remaining assumptions in the blueprint including payment of the ICRMP insurance on a one-time basis during FY 2012 at \$850 per district. Mr. Radford seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed.**

Break at 3:49 p.m.

Reconvened at 3:57 p.m.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE**

Ms. Schmidt announced that she has submitted her resignation to start her own consulting firm, Summit Business Solutions, and her last day with the Commission will be May 6, 2011. A smooth transition plan has been put into place and she feels that Conservation Partnership is in a great place to move forward. Mr. Radford expressed his appreciation to everything that Ms. Schmidt has done to help him and help the Commission to get to where it is today.

**Mr. Radford moved to accept the resignation of Sara Schmidt as Administrator of the Commission effective May 6, 2011. Mr. Stutzman seconded and further expressed his appreciation for all that she has done. Further discussion and sentiments expressed about the value Ms. Schmidt has brought to the Commission. Roll call vote was taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion passed.**

#### **UPDATE ON RULEMAKING FOR DISTRICT ALLOCATIONS**

Kristin Magruder presented the update on the rulemaking for district allocations. The temporary rule for district allocations will expire on June 30, 2011 and the Commission will need to direct staff to engage in the rulemaking process in order to adopt a new temporary rule to take effect on July 1, 2011. This temporary/proposed rule will need to be adopted by the Commission in order have the appropriate mechanisms in place to get district allocations out as soon as possible after the start of the fiscal year. The Commission will then continue with the rulemaking process for legislative review during the FY2012 session.

Highlights of proposed updates and improvements to the rule include: updated definitions; organizations added as an entity able to donate funds and services to the districts; added a match funding restriction disallowing any funds or services that are obligated to another project or grant; and simplified the reporting process.

Staff is recommending that required reports be reduced from four to three: Antidegradation Plan / 5-year Plan with Annual Work Plan; Performance Report; and Financial and Match Report. The intent of the policy is to tie the required reports together in a meaningful and comprehensive way so they are useful to the districts and meet all of the reporting

221 requirements for the Commission. A comprehensive guidance document is being crafted to  
222 provide adequate instructions for completing, submitting and using the reports.  
223  
224 **Mr. Bronson moved to direct staff to proceed with rulemaking on as soon as it is allowed.**  
225 **Mr. Radford seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed.**  
226  
227 **Mr. Radford, SWC Member, moved to enter into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code §**  
228 **67-2345(a) to discuss personnel matters. Mr. Stutzman seconded. No discussion. Roll call**  
229 **vote was taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion passed unanimously.**  
230  
231 The Commission moved into executive session at 4:36 p.m. Sara Schmidt, Kristin Magruder, Bill  
232 Lillibridge and Harriet Hensley were invited to stay.  
233  
234 Executive session ended at 4:55 p.m.  
235  
236 **There being no further business, Mr. Bronson moved to recess the meeting at 4:56 p.m. and**  
237 **reconvene the following morning at 8:30 a.m. Mr. Radford seconded. Motion passed.**  
238  
239 Respectfully submitted,  
240  
241 Dick Bronson  
242 Commissioner and Secretary,  
243 Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission